

6 February 2026

Our Ref Cabinet Tuesday, 17 February 2026
Contact. Committee Services
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To: Members of the Cabinet:

Executive Members Councillors: Val Bryant (Chair) Sean Nolan (Vice Chair) Ian Albert,
Amy Allen, Daniel Allen, Mick Debenham, Tamsin Thomas, Laura Williams and
Donna Wright.

**NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN OF A
MEETING OF THE CABINET**

to be held in the

COUNCIL CHAMBER - DCO

on

TUESDAY, 17TH FEBRUARY, 2026 AT 7.30 PM

Yours sincerely,

Isabelle Alajooz
Director – Governance

****MEMBERS PLEASE ENSURE THAT YOU DOWNLOAD ALL AGENDAS AND REPORTS VIA THE MOD.GOV APPLICATION ON YOUR TABLET BEFORE ATTENDING THE MEETING****

Agenda

Part I

Item		Page
1.	APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE	
2.	MINUTES - 20 JANUARY 2026 To take as read and approve as a true record the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on the 20 January 2026.	(Pages 5 - 18)
3.	NOTIFICATION OF OTHER BUSINESS Members should notify the Chair of other business which they wish to be discussed at the end of either Part I or Part II business set out in the agenda. They must state the circumstances which they consider justify the business being considered as a matter of urgency. The Chair will decide whether any item(s) raised will be considered.	
4.	CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS <u>Climate Emergency</u> The Council has declared a climate emergency and is committed to achieving a target of zero carbon emissions by 2030 and helping local people and businesses to reduce their own carbon emissions. A Cabinet Panel on the Environment has been established to engage with local people on matters relating to the climate emergency and advise the council on how to achieve these climate change objectives. A Climate Change Implementation group of councillors and council officers meets regularly to produce plans and monitor progress. Actions taken or currently underway include switching to green energy, incentives for low emission taxis, expanding tree planting and working to cut food waste. In addition the council is a member of the Hertfordshire Climate Change and Sustainability Partnership, working with other councils across Hertfordshire to reduce the county's carbon emissions and climate impact. The Council's dedicated webpage on Climate Change includes details of the council's climate change strategy, the work of the Cabinet Panel on the Environment and a monthly briefing on progress. <u>Ecological Emergency</u> The Council has declared an ecological emergency and is committed to addressing the ecological emergency and nature recovery by identifying appropriate areas for habitat restoration and biodiversity net gain whilst ensuring that development limits impact on existing habitats in its process.	

The Council has set out to do that by a) setting measurable targets and standards for biodiversity increase, in both species and quantities, seeking to increase community engagement, b) to work with our partners to establish a Local Nature Partnership for Hertfordshire and to develop Nature Recovery Networks and Nature Recovery Strategy for Hertfordshire and c) to investigate new approaches to nature recovery such as habitat banking that deliver biodiversity objectives and provide new investment opportunities.

Declarations of Interest

Members are reminded that any declarations of interest in respect of any business set out in the agenda, should be declared as either a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest or Declarable Interest and are required to notify the Chair of the nature of any interest declared at the commencement of the relevant item on the agenda. Members declaring a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest must withdraw from the meeting for the duration of the item. Members declaring a Declarable Interest, wishing to exercise a 'Councillor Speaking Right', must declare this at the same time as the interest, move to the public area before speaking to the item and then must leave the room before the debate and vote.

5. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

To receive petitions, comments and questions from the public.

6. ITEMS REFERRED FROM OTHER COMMITTEES

Any Items referred from other committees will be circulated as soon as they are available.

7. CORPORATE PEER CHALLENGE FOLLOW UP REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

(Pages
19 - 52)

The Council undertook a Corporate Peer Challenge (CPC) between 4 and 7 November 2024, where we were visited by a peer team supported by the Local Government Association. The peer team produced a feedback report, which was reported to Cabinet on 14 January 2025. Subsequently an Action Plan was developed to respond to the recommendations and was approved by Cabinet on 23 March 2025, with an update on progress reported to Cabinet on 23 September 2025. The peer team undertook a one day follow up visit on 15 December 2025 and have issued a follow up report, which is attached at Appendix A.

8. BIODIVERSITY DUTY REPORT 2026 REPORT OF THE POLICY AND COMMUNITY MANAGER

(Pages
53 - 64)

In accordance with the Biodiversity Duty (Environment Act 2021), Local Authorities and Local Planning Authorities must publish a biodiversity report. The report documents the policies and actions the council has carried out to comply with the Biodiversity Duty.

9. HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION GRANT ALLOCATIONS AND UPDATE REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR – REGULATORY

(Pages
65 - 74)

Demand for the Council's housing services remains high with the need to secure additional services for those threatened with, or experiencing homelessness.

- 10. NORTH HERTS COUNCIL STRAY DOGS POLICY** (Pages
REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR – REGULATORY 75 - 126)

The purpose of this report is to provide the key information to enable North Herts Council (the Council) to adopt a Stray Dogs Policy to allow the Council to fulfil its statutory duties in accordance with the Environmental Protection Act, 1990 (the Act), in a consistent, appropriate and fair manner.

- 11. DESIGN CODE SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT - APPROVAL** (Pages
FOR PUBLIC CONSULTATION 127 -
REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR – PLACE 440)

We are preparing a Design Code Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) to provide additional detail and clarity to Local Plan Policy SP9 (Design and Sustainability) and other relevant policies in the Plan.

- 12. PROPOSED CAR PARKING TARIFFS FOR 2026/27** (Pages
REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR – PLACE 441 -
462)

To implement an increase in car parking tariffs, season tickets and permits within resident parking zones in order to effectively manage their use and in accordance with the Council's fees and charges policy as set out in MTFS.

- 13. BUDGET 2026/27 (REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGETS)** (Pages
REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR – RESOURCES 463 -
500)

Cabinet recommends a budget for 2026/27 to Council for their consideration and approval.

- 14. INVESTMENT STRATEGY 2026/27** (Pages
REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR – RESOURCES 501 -
540)

The Investment Strategy provides the following key information:

- Recommendations on the Prudential and other Treasury indicators that will be monitored and reported on during the year (2026/27).
- As the Council has identified a need to borrow for capital purposes, a borrowing and Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) policy.
- The scope of treasury investments where the Council will invest any surplus cash.